

The Succession of Constantino 47

3 asking that his son might come to him, or that

son was eager to comply.

^actantius, * who does his best to make history lantic and exciting, describes the eventual escape Constantine in one of his most graphic chapters.

shows us Galcarius in his palace reluctantly ling an order which authorised Constantine to /el post across the Continent of Europe. lie y consented to do so, we are told, because he Id find no pretext for further delay, and he gave

order to Constantine late in the afternoon, on

understanding that he should see him again the morning to receive his final instructions* ; all the time, says Lactantius, Galcarius was sming to find some excuse for keeping him in omccilia, or contemplated sending a message to eras, asking him to delay Constantine when he :hcd the border of northern Italy. Galcarius then f dinner, retired for the night, and slept so well deliberately that he did not wake until the >wing midday (*Cum consutto ad medium diem ic dormissct*). He then sent for Constantine to ie to his apartment But Constantine was ady gone, scouring the roads as fast as the post >es could carry him, and so anxious to increase distance between himself and Galcarius that he »ed the tired beasts to be hamstrung at every e. lie had waited for Galerius to retire and

then slipped away, lest the Emperor .should igc his mind. Galerius was furious when lit? id that he had been outwitted. lie ordered